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## EDITORIAL NOTES

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The announcement that Mr. Carnegie has decided to give three million dollars for the purpose of improving the schools of ten cities raises the very interesting general question of the advantage and methods of using private benefactions for institutions which have heretofore been regarded as very exclusively public in character. It has been a common experience in American education for private benefaction to establish and maintain higher institutions of learning, but we have regarded the public school as an enterprise to be maintained wholly through public funds. It has frequently been suggested that the endowment of public schools might improve the character of these institutions, but the problem of administering such private endowments has not often arisen in any concrete form.

There is one interesting case of such private benefaction left to a city school system in the Gregg Legacy, which places in the hands of the Board of Education of the city of Indianapolis a very considerable sum of money to be used annually in the training of teachers. This fund has been expended in sending teachers of the Indianapolis school system away for purposes of advanced study. In some cases a teacher has been sent to Europe or one of the higher institutions for a whole year. In other cases the period of study provided has been much shorter, covering a summer school or a single term of study in some educational institution. Those who have observed the working of this plan in Indianapolis are very enthusiastic about its effect on the teaching corps. The possibility of further study acts as an incentive to the teachers to maintain a higher grade of regular work. Furthermore, the advantages gained through the period of study are brought back to the school system in the form of reports and classes, which can be led during the winter by those who have had the ad-

vantage of study, and in increased efficiency on the part of those who have enjoyed the benefits of the fund.

The administration of this Indianapolis fund has been relatively simple because the fund has been in the hands of the regular offices of the school system. Whatever the superintendent of schools considered to be advantageous for the system as a whole could be fostered through the use of this fund. It is by no means as easy to see how an outside committee of administrators could improve a school system which was not prepared in its own organization to administer such a fund. The outside board or committee would find it extremely difficult to form an adequate opinion of the efficiency of teachers and to distribute the funds to them in anything like an adequate fashion.

Improvement of the teachers suggests itself as the first avenue for the expenditure of such a private benefaction to the public schools. Other types of activity, however, can be suggested especially with reference to the pupils in the schools. There are many pupils who are said to leave school because of the economic demands made by the family that the younger members of the household contribute to the family support. It would be an extremely interesting task for a committee supplied with private funds to inquire into the cases of such students and, where they were found at all worthy, to pay a part or the whole of the income which they would gain from leaving school and entering the factories. We should then have a definite experiment which would help us to solve the vexed question of whether our public life is losing through these early withdrawals from the school.

Mr. Staples was able to show, in an article in the February number of the *Elementary School Teacher*, a very close relation between income in later life and the period of one's schooling. A small investment from a private fund might raise the efficiency of a great number of children to a point where the community would profit in later generations by this investment in pupils as much as by an investment in the teachers themselves.

One of the very impressive features of the recent meeting of the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association was the variety of interests that were represented at this meeting. We frequently make the remark that our school system is becoming more and more of a unit. Colleges see their relation to the problem of elementary school work. The normal school and the college are approaching each other in the type of work which they undertake, and the high school, standing between the elementary school and the upper schools, constitutes a link of the most intimate sort in the chain of educational succession. Certainly this remark with regard to the unity of our school system was justified in the various lines of activity represented at the recent meeting of the superintendents. College teachers of education were present at this meeting and held important sessions. There were societies for the study of physical education dealing with problems that related to all grades of schools. Papers on the major programmes dealt not only with instruction in the common schools but also with the relation of such instruction to all types of institutions and to all types of specialized work.

This concrete exhibition of the unity of our educational system is a very welcome indication of the advance that has been made in recent years in bringing together all kinds of teachers. The time was when there were no college teachers of education and no organizations that would have brought together those interested in higher education and those interested in the elementary schools. That period of separation is past and whatever can be contributed in the way of scientific studies or by way of efforts toward a unified course of studies throughout the schools, is now recognized as a legitimate part of institutional work of all grades.